

BASEBALL 86

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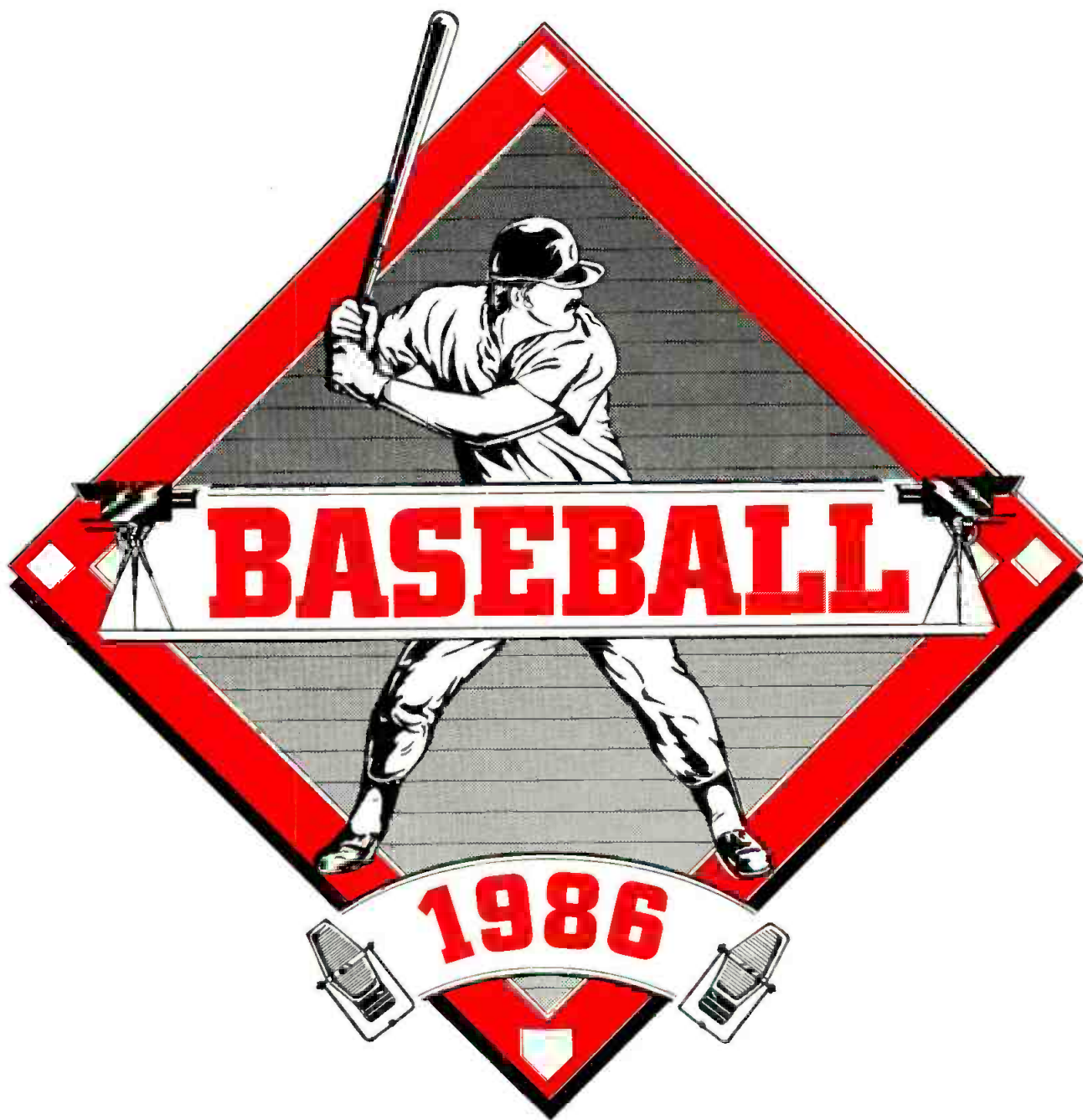
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Special Report



A BROADCAST AND CABLE RIGHTS RECORD

Baseball bats over \$300 million in 1986

With built-in escalator clauses in its television network rights contracts, and continued competitive bidding by media outlets on the local level, Major League Baseball and its 26 teams will accrue, for the first time in one season, more than \$300 million in rights payments. According to reports from league, team and media sources, combined network and local baseball rights payments will total more than \$320 million, up 14.7% over last year's total of almost \$279 million. ABC-TV and NBC-TV continue to pay the largest sums to the league under a six-year, \$1.2-billion

pact that extends through the 1989 season. ABC will pay about \$95 million this year, \$15 million more than it paid in 1985, and NBC will pay \$80 million this year, compared to about \$75 million it paid last year. CBS Radio will pay about \$6 million for its schedule of games, about what it paid last year. Thus, network payments for MLB rights this year will total about \$181 million, up 12.4%.

Local rights payments will climb 18.3% in 1986 to almost \$139.5

million. The eastern division teams of the American and National Leagues continue to generate higher local rights fees (which are often a combination cash payment and share of advertising revenues, including some barter arrangements) than their western division counterparts. The teams in the American League East will receive rights payments this year totaling almost \$45 million, up close to 16% over 1985. The National League East teams will receive a total of \$43.5 million, up about 15%. The American League West teams will be paid almost \$29.2 million, a gain of more than 25% over last year, and the teams in the National League West will receive more than \$22 million, up over 21.5%.

The network payments are distributed equally among the 26 teams through a central fund managed by the office of the baseball commissioner. This year, each team will receive almost \$7 million in payments from the networks. In addition to those payments, the league will distribute to all the teams, for the second year, what it has termed "compensatory" payments from the five teams whose games are carried by superstations into the television markets of other teams. Those teams are the Atlanta Braves (WTBS-TV Atlanta), Chicago Cubs (WGN-TV Chicago), New York Yankees (WPIX-TV New York), New York Mets (WOR-TV New York) and Texas Rangers (KTVT-TV Fort Worth). Combined, the payments from the five teams this year will total between \$8.5 million and \$9 million, with the Braves and Cubs paying the lion's share because their games are distributed to far more cable subscribers than the Mets, Yankees or Rangers.

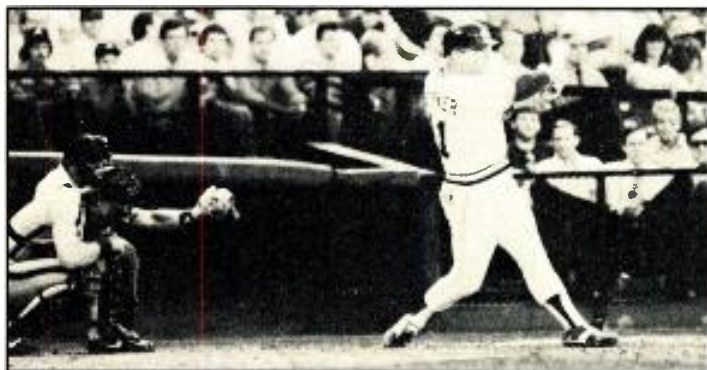
It was only two years ago that the league and its teams broke the \$200 million rights mark, principally due to a new network contract that tripled annual TV network rights for the league overnight. Since that time, all three networks have been outspoken about what they see as excessive rights payments and the inability to make an equitable return on their investments. As far as the MLB network package is concerned, most agree that NBC is in a far better position with its part of the package than ABC. ABC's problem has been that its prime time Monday night baseball games never caught on the way *Monday Night Football* did. In addition, while its rights fees have more than tripled under the new pact, it has cut back the number of regular season broadcasts from a high of 18 in 1982 to 11 last year, severely restricting its baseball inventory. By comparison, NBC carries 30 regular season games during its *Game of the Week* on Saturdays.

In January, however, ABC announced that it intended to expand its regular season baseball coverage considerably, up to 14 Sunday afternoon games—most of which would fill the spring program void left by the United States Football League's planned move to a fall schedule—and eight Monday night games. However, NBC has challenged ABC's right to broadcast any Sunday baseball games during the first two months of the season. NBC contends that its pact with the league gives it not only exclusive network rights to all regular-season Saturday games, but also exclusive rights for both Saturdays and Sundays during the first two months of the season. MLB executives have conceded that the contracts with both networks are vague enough to allow for different interpretations on the point. Having submitted their positions to the league, the networks are waiting for the commissioner to come up with a resolution.

But no matter how that situation is resolved, NBC appears to be in a much better situation to make money on baseball than ABC this year. Part of that stems from NBC's having the World Series this year and all of the games will, for the second year in a row, be in prime time. It is believed that NBC expects to charge about \$275,000 per 30-second spot during the World Series. Even if the series only runs for four of the seven possible games, at that rate, NBC stands to generate a minimum of \$46.75 million in net series revenue. If the series goes to all seven games, the network could make \$96.25 million in net revenue, which would more than cover NBC's 1986 rights payment of \$80 million. It is also believed that the network hopes to sell its 12 second-quarter regular season games for about \$44,000 per 30 and 14 third-quarter regular season games at \$33,000 per 30, as well as two prime time contests for at least \$80,000 per 30. At those rates, if the network sells out its schedule of 25 minutes per game, it would generate net revenue of close to \$49 million. ABC's baseball sales outlook will depend on how the league rules on the early-season Sunday games dispute. At risk is more than half the

inventory within the proposed 14 Sunday-game schedule, which is worth about \$23.8 million in net revenue if the network sells it out at its asking price of \$40,000 per 30. "We are proceeding under the assumption that we will be telecasting Sunday afternoon baseball," said Larre Barrett, vice president in charge of sports sales for ABC-TV. He said the sports division is looking at a number of program options in the event the league's ruling goes in favor of NBC. ABC will air eight Monday night games beginning June 30 with a rate card of \$75,000, up a little more than 5% from a year ago. If those games sell out at that price, they would yield about 25.5 million in net revenue. ABC also has the All Star Game this year, which is being sold at \$230,000 per 30, about \$10,000 more than NBC charged for it last year. If it sells out, the network would receive perhaps \$9.8 million in net revenue.

ABC also has the playoff games this year, scheduled to begin Oct. 7. Of the 14 possible games, nine are scheduled for prime time, three on weekdays and two during the day on the weekends. The asking rate for the prime time games is \$125,000 per 30; weekday day games are \$25,000, and weekend day games are \$75,000. If the games sell out (which they usually do) at the published rates, the playoffs would generate more than \$57 million in net revenue for ABC. Excluding the disputed Sunday schedule, ABC would appear,



at best, to be able to produce about \$93 million in net revenue from its baseball lineup this year, about \$2 million short of the scheduled rights payment. (That doesn't take into account production costs associated with the telecasts, estimated by one network source at \$100,000 for each daytime game and perhaps double that for each prime time game.). Thus, the league's decision on ABC's Sunday schedule appears to be a determining factor in whether the network can make a small return on its rights investment this year or will instead incur a substantial loss. Newly named ABC Sports President Dennis Swanson recently summed up his position on ABC and Major League Baseball coverage: "Boy, will I be glad when 1989 gets here."

NBC says it has sold more than 60% of its regular season schedule. "People buy on history," said Robert Blackmore, senior vice president, sales, NBC Television Network. "Baseball was strong last year," he added, noting that while the ratings were flat for the regular season, at 6.4/21, the male 25-54 demographic was up 10%. According to ABC's Barrett, the network's tentative Sunday schedule is "approaching 50% sold," while the sales effort for Monday night games, which don't begin until June 30, has not yet begun. "It's a little bit slower than we would like," said Barrett, "but there is a need for the gross ratings points that the USFL generated." He attributed the slowness in sales to the generally soft sales marketplace.

Sales pacing at the local level this year has varied so far, but more than one local sales executive reported softer than usual sales. "A lot of people are reevaluating their commitment to sports," said one executive in a major east coast market. "There are a lot of alternatives out there."

Several advertising categories have been affected by recent changes in the law and MLB's own regulations. President Reagan was expected to sign into law late last week or early this week a law banning smokeless tobacco advertising from the airwaves. The Television Bureau of Advertising estimated that for 1984, the latest figures available, that category amounted to about \$17 million in

AMERICAN LEAGUE EAST

Team	1986 rights	1985 rights	TV originator and affiliates	Radio originator and affiliates	Rights holders
Baltimore Orioles	\$ 6,000,000	\$4,000,000	WMAR-TV 8	WFBR 60-65	WMAR-TV holds TV rights; WFBR holds radio rights; Home Team Sports holds pay-cable rights.
Boston Red Sox	4,600,000	4,200,000	WSBK-TV 6	WPLM 65	WSBK-TV holds TV rights; WPLM holds radio rights; New England Sports Network holds pay cable rights.
Cleveland Indians	3,000,000	3,400,000	WUAB 2	WWWE 28	WUAB holds TV rights; WWWE holds radio rights.
Detroit Tigers	4,400,000	4,000,000	WDIV 5	WJR 37	WDIV holds TV rights; WJR holds radio rights; Pro Am Sports holds cable rights.
Milwaukee Brewers	3,500,000	2,200,000	WVTV 4	WTMJ 64	WVTV holds TV rights and Brewers retain radio rights.
New York Yankees	15,500,000	14,000,000	WPIX(TV) 10	WABC 60	WPIX holds TV rights; Yankees retain radio rights; Sportschannel holds pay cable rights.
Toronto Blue Jays	7,750,000	7,000,000	CTV-TV	CJCL 52	Labatt Breweries of Canada (45% owner of Blue Jays) holds TV rights; Telemedia Broadcast Systems holds radio rights; The Sports Network holds cable rights.

AMERICAN LEAGUE WEST

California Angels	4,200,000	4,200,000	KTLA 15	KMPC English 28 XPRS Spanish	Angels retain TV and radio rights; XPRS Rosa-Rita (Tijuana), Mexico holds Spanish radio rights.
Chicago White Sox	8,250,000	4,000,000	WFLD-TV 5	WMAQ 15	WFLD-TV owns TV rights; Team retains radio and cable rights.
Kansas City Royals	2,000,000	1,400,000	WDAF-TV 18	WIBW 117	WDAF-TV holds TV rights; WIBW radio rights.
Minnesota Twins	3,600,000	3,500,000	KSMP-TV 3	WCCO 60	KMSP-TV holds TV rights; WCCO holds radio rights.
Oakland As	3,000,000	2,500,000	KPIX 8	KSFO 14 KBRG Spanish	KPIX holds TV rights; KSFO holds English radio rights; KBRG holds Spanish-language radio rights.
Seattle Mariners	2,100,000	1,600,000	KIRO-TV 5	KIRO 20	KIRO holds TV and radio rights.
Texas Rangers	6,000,000	6,000,000	KTVT	WBAP	KTVT holds TV rights; WBAP holds radio rights; Home Sports Entertainment holds pay-cable rights.

NATIONAL LEAGUE EAST

Chicago Cubs	4,300,000	3,600,000	WGN-TV	WGN	Stations hold rights under agreement with commonly owned Cubs. Labatt Breweries holds TV rights; CFCF holds English radio rights; CKAC holds French radio rights; the Sports Network holds cable rights.
Montreal Expos	8,000,000	7,500,000	CBC-TV English 43 French 12	CFCF 20 CKAC	
New York Mets	14,500,000	12,100,000	WOR-TV 6	WHN 22	Mets have partnership arrangements with broadcast originators; Sportschannel holds pay-cable rights.
Philadelphia Phillies	9,100,000	8,500,000	WTAF-TV 2	WCAU 25	Originating stations hold broadcast rights; Prism holds cable rights.
Pittsburgh Pirates	3,000,000	3,000,000	KDKA-TV	KDKA	Group W (KDKA-AM-TV) holds broadcast rights.
St. Louis Cardinals	4,600,000	3,100,000	KSDK 15	KMOX 115	Originating stations hold broadcast rights; Sencom holds cable rights.

NATIONAL LEAGUE WEST

Atlanta Braves	3,500,000	3,100,000	WTBS	WSB	WTBS is TV rights holder under agreement with commonly owned Braves; team retains radio rights.
Cincinnati Reds	5,500,000	2,300,000	WLWT 16	WLW 81	WLWT holds TV rights; Reds retain radio rights.
Houston Astros	3,400,000	3,200,000	KTXH	KTRH	KTXH holds TV; Astros retain radio rights; Home Sports Entertainment holds cable rights.
Los Angeles Dodgers	4,600,000	4,000,000	KTTV	KABC	Dodgers retain broadcast rights, selling through Dodgers Radio and Television Network. Dodgers and Metromedia Television hold pay-TV rights jointly in Dodgervision pay-per-view venture.
San Diego Padres	2,800,000	2,750,000	KCST 7 30	KFMB 6 XEXX	Broadcast originators hold origination rights only; team holds rights to distribute broadcasts to regional networks; XEXX holds Spanish radio rights; Padres and Cox jointly hold pay TV rights.
San Francisco Giants	2,750,000	2,750,000	KTVU 3	KNBR 7 KOFY	Broadcast originators hold rights.

AL total	\$73,900,000	\$62,000,000
NL total	\$65,550,000	\$55,900,000
Majors total	\$139,450,000	\$117,900,000

Not included in the table are network payments for nationally broadcast games that total about \$181 million, ABC-TV—\$95 million, NBC-TV—\$80 million and CBS Radio—\$6 million.

spot and network revenues. The Radio Advertising Bureau estimated that for the first nine months of 1985 smokeless tobacco accounted for about \$1.5 million in spot dollars and \$1 million in network dollars. However, MLB lifted a ban that restricted three categories from advertising during game broadcasts—state lotteries, casino gambling and horse racing. According to TVB, state lotteries spent \$30 million in spot television in 1985, while horse racing advertising totaled about \$10.4 million. Casino advertising, TVB said, was included in the \$55 million hotel category. The figures were sketchier on the radio side, but the RAB reports a minimum \$3.9 million in spot radio dollars for both state lotteries and casinos for the first nine months of 1985 and no more than \$500,000 for horse racing in the same period.

As for baseball coverage by cable television, it appears that situation is still in flux. "We might still be in a shaking out period of finding out what works for cable and what works for baseball," said Bryan Burns, MLB's director of broadcasting. "We have had a number of unfortunate failures" in the past year, said Burns, referring to the folding last year of the TCI/Multimedia/Anheuser-Busch venture, SportsTime, after only one season. Also folding their tents were Sportsvue in Milwaukee and Home Sports Entertainment in Pittsburgh, although TCI, which owns the Pittsburgh cable system is currently negotiating for the cable rights to the Pirates games. A network in Cleveland for Indians games never got off the ground

after about three years of trying.

Those regional networks still in the business are concentrated in the top 10 markets, have more than one franchise to offer viewers and, in most cases, are offering service to at least a portion of their universe on a basic or tiered basis. "You have to be a year-round business" to succeed in regional sports networking, said Bill Aber, general manager of the Washington-based Home Team Sports, which serves the Baltimore and Washington markets. The exception, he added, is pay-per-view, which a number of baseball teams are experimenting with this year, including Cincinnati for the first time. Also, he said, many of those who failed may have entered the business with expectations too high. "It's the classic small business problem," he said. "Ninety percent wash out the first year."

Most of the surviving networks are offering some or all of their cable operator constituents the option to offer the service as a stand-alone pay channel, or as part of a pay tier or basic package. "I have taken the position that I have a finite number of people to do business with," said Aber. The trick is to work out some kind of arrangement with a substantial portion of those people, he said, "or go out of business." Some disagree with that philosophy however, including John Claiborne, general manager of the New England Sports Network, Boston. On basic cable, he said, a regional network "is just another form of over-the-air [television]" that detracts from the stadium's gate. "Pay does not hurt the gate," added Claiborne. "But there is a limit to how much the subscriber will pay."

A team-by-team breakdown follows:

Atlanta Braves

Ted Turner's Atlanta Braves will be seen as many as 150 times during the upcoming exhibition and regular season games on Ted Turner's superstation WTBS-TV Atlanta, which reaches 35 million cable homes via satellite in addition to homes in the Atlanta market. WTBS can't give a precise number of games because it's committed to airing 129 hours of the Goodwill Games from Moscow between July 5 and July 20, the heart of the baseball season. Coverage of the international games, which are being co-sponsored by Turner, could cause the preemption of some games and the delayed broadcast of others.

One thing the Braves are sure of is saturation radio coverage. According to Wayne Long, director of broadcasting, the Braves have again tapped WSB(AM) Atlanta to be the flagship of their radio network. This year the network will comprise between 120 and 125 stations, up about 10% from last season's 112. The network will carry five pre-season and all 162 regular-season games. WSB is also committed to airing an additional 15 preseason games without the network.

The Braves' four returning announcers—Ernie Johnson, Skip Caray, Peter Van Wieren and John Sterling—will take turns in the radio and television booths.

Heading the list of radio advertisers are: Anheuser-Busch, Lancaster Chewing Tobacco, Coca-Cola, Delta Airlines, Century Insurance, Goody's Headache Powder and Taco Bell.

Among the television advertisers: Anheuser-Busch, Delta Airlines, Toyota, Canon, Red Man Chewing Tobacco and Eckerd Drug.

Baltimore Orioles

In addition to their periodic appearance on ABC and NBC, the Baltimore Orioles will be seen on television at least 125 times this season—40 times on WMAR-TV Baltimore and its network of eight other television stations, and at least 85 times on Home Team Sports, the regional pay sports network. (WMAR-TV and HTS will also warm up its veteran announcing crews and viewers with five preseason games each.)

For the eighth season, WFBR(AM) holds the radio rights. The station and its network of 60-65 radio stations will air all 162 regular-season games as well as 12 preseason outings. Independent Network Consultants, Rockville, Md., is putting the network together for WFBR.

Returning to the booth for WMAR-TV are Chuck Thompson (play by play) and former Oriole Brooks Robinson (color). For HTS, Mel Procter and former Oriole John Lowenstein will repeat as the announcers and Rex Barney and Tom Davis will again handle the pre-game and post-game duties. Former Oriole Jim Palmer and Mutual Broadcasting/CNN talk show host Larry King will return to contribute color and commentary to the HTS telecasts on an "as-available" basis. Last year Palmer and King appeared 11 and 25 times, respectively. HTS expects them to make fewer appearances this year.

Some of the big advertisers WMAR-TV has lined up for 1986: Anheuser-Busch, Nissan, Provident Bank of Maryland, Bell Atlantic Yellow Pages, Maryland National Bank, Jerry's Chevrolet and Equitable Bank. WMAR-TV includes only four minutes of A-B spots per game in its network feed, giving affiliates 23 minutes of local ad time.

Strohs, Giant Food, Subaru Atlantic, Lennox Industries, Maryland State Lottery,

All-Star Dodge and All State Leasing are already on board for the HTS telecasts and Miller Brewing, Chevrolet, Amoco, Gwaltney Meats, Loyola Federal Savings and Loan and Jiffy Lube, for the WFBR broadcasts.

Boston Red Sox

WSBK-TV Boston will slightly increase the number of Red Sox games it will broadcast to 78, including three exhibition games. The Sox network carrying approximately 30 of the games has been expanded to six, with the addition of WNE-TV Hartford, Vt. (Burlington, Vt.-Plattsburgh, N.Y.). Stewart Tauber, WSBK-TV's assistant general manager said advertising arrangements are still being worked on, but that Anheuser-Busch will definitely be in the lineup. WSBK-TV's rights fees will be determined by a formula based on the ratings performance of the games.

The station's parent company, Storer Communications, is now in the fourth year of a cable sports channel partnership, the New England Sports Network (NESN), along with the Red Sox and the Bruins hockey team. It will carry 87 Red Sox games (the others are carried by WSBK-TV) to more than 90,000 subscribers, triple the number of subscribers last year, said John Claiborne, vice president and general manager of NESN. The monthly fee is going from \$8.95 to \$9.95 for the service, which is still not carried in Boston because the MSO Cablevision has an interest in a rival cable service, SportsChannel. Roughly 10% of NESN's revenue comes from advertising and on Red

Sox games that will include Polaroid, New England Ford and Toyota.

WPLM-AM-FM Plymouth, Mass., will continue to originate the radio broadcasts to a lineup of more than 64 stations. Budweiser continues to be a major sponsor.

California Angels

In 1986 the Angels home games will not be carried on a pay service. Last year, 13 Sunday games were broadcast by Selec TV, a subscription TV service, over KWHY-TV Los Angeles, but, according to John Hays, senior vice president, marketing, for the ball club, the Selec TV contract was not renewed because the service could not guarantee enough subscribers. "If a cable system would be established that could afford the rights," Hays said, the club would consider a pay service again.

On broadcast television, KTLA(TV) Los Angeles enters the fourth year of a five-year contract with the Angels in 1986. Radio coverage will be provided by the KMPC(AM) Los Angeles. Both stations have carried the Gene Autry-owned ball club since 1961. Autry owns KMPC, and is the former owner (along with the Signal Cos.) of KTLA, which he sold to Wometco in 1983. Cross-promotion of the Angels by the stations and the team has already featured a number of speeches by Autry and a large client party for sponsors.

This year, Spanish-language radio coverage will be provided by XEPRS(AM) Rosarita Beach, Mexico (Tijuana).

KMPC executive vice president, Bill Ward, said that the sales pace this year is about 80% ahead of last year. Sponsors include Anheuser-Busch, Chevron and the Southern California Chevy dealers. KMPC will carry 175 games that will be carried on a network of 28 stations.

KTLA will cover two preseason and 43 regular-season games. Bob Starr and Joe Torre will handle the play by play. Mike Eigner, vice president and general manager, said that sales were going "fairly well," and that the station was in the process of talking to a number of new clients. Returning as advertisers are Pacific Bell, Anheuser-Busch, Toyota and Mark C. Bloome Auto.

Chicago Cubs

WGN(AM) Chicago will broadcast 162 regular-season games and 12 exhibition contests this year. The team has arranged a regional network of 63 stations to carry the Cubs.

Wayne Vriesman, vice president and general sales manager, said sales "are at least on a par" with last year but said that a number of advertisers are on the verge of signing. Clients already in the fold include Heileman Brewing, True Value Hardware, Chevrolet, Marathon Oil and Talman/Home Federal Savings. On the television side, WGN-TV will telecast 146 regularly scheduled games and four exhibition games. A regional network of 12 stations has been put together. Joseph T. Laughlin, vice president and general manager, said sales are outpacing 1985, with about two-thirds of the inventory sold. Among the more active advertisers signed are Budweiser, Pepsi-Cola, True Value Hardware, United Airlines, Union Oil, Buick and Toyota.

Chicago White Sox

The White Sox learned this year just how valuable a baseball franchise can be, particularly for an independent station trying to establish a local identity. Metromedia's WFLD-TV Chicago was in the last year of a five-year pact with the team, but according to a team source, WFBN(TV), acquired by Milton Grant last year, came "hot and heavy after the White Sox," trying to get the rights. But WFLD-TV renegotiated a new five-year pact a year early—and in the process more than doubled the team's total local rights payment this year.

WMAQ(AM) Chicago is in the last year of its agreement with the team and Sportsvision,

now with 400,000 cable subscribers, will feed 54 home games, 15 away games and 6 exhibition contests to area cable systems. Sportsvision, now owned by Cablevision, CBS and the Washington Post, doubled its subscriber count over the past year by giving cable operators the option of carrying the channel on basic service.

Cincinnati Reds

Reds baseball will again appear on WLWT(TV) Cincinnati under a rights contract good through 1987. The contract has an escalator clause under which rights rose to \$2.5 million this year. WLWT has added three affiliates—WDRB-TV Louisville, Ky.; WLIO(TV) Lima, Ohio, and WUPW(TV) Toledo, Ohio—bringing its network to 16 affiliates. WLWT will carry 47 games and license 43 to the affiliates on a 50-50 barter basis. Its major sponsors include Anheuser-Busch and Toyota. This year, the games will be called by the new team of Steve Physioc, the station's sports director; Joe Nuxhall, and Marty Brennaman.

The Reds are retaining the radio and cable rights, and WLW(AM) Cincinnati will remain the flagship for its radio broadcasts. The games will be offered to 81 affiliates on a barter arrangement under which the stations will get about nine minutes for ads during each game. Nuxhall and Brennaman, will continue as the radio announcers, juggling their radio chores with their new TV responsibilities. Major sponsors for the team are Anheuser-

Baseball's radio lineup

The CBS Radio Network enters its second year of *Game of the Week* broadcasts this season. (Last year marked the first time a *Game of the Week* program appeared on network radio in nearly 30 years.) The show proved to be a popular vehicle for both advertisers and stations last season. The weekly games are part of a five-year, \$32 million deal between CBS and Major League Baseball that extends through the 1989 season.

Like last year, the weekly broadcast schedule, which runs for 20 weeks, contains two games (one day and one night) every Saturday beginning with the Toronto Blue Jays at the Cleveland Indians and the New York Mets at the San Diego Padres on May 24. CBS also plans to air "important midweek contests" toward the end of the season.

Announcers for CBS Radio's baseball coverage are Brent Musburger, Dick Stockton, Lindsey Nelson, Johnny Bench, John Rooney, Curt Cowdy, Jerry Coleman, Bill White, Bob Murphy, Howard David and Ted Robinson, all of whom will be paired off on a rotating basis. And as an added feature, local team announcers will join the CBS crew during the fifth inning of each game.

In addition to airing weekly games, the exclusive CBS baseball rights pact includes the annual All Star game, league championships and the World Series. Among the major sponsors for CBS's entire baseball schedule are Anheuser-Busch, Honda and State Farm Insurance. Advertisers can also choose between the summer package (*Game of the Week* and All Star game) and the fall package (league championships and World Series).

Thus far, 125 stations have signed to air CBS's baseball coverage including outlets in seven of the top 10 markets. Last season, CBS had baseball carriage on some 220 stations.

are Anheuser-Busch, Marathon Oil, Chevrolet and Kahn's Meats.

The Reds are also offering 25 home games on a pay-per-view basis over Warner Amex Cable Communications' Cincinnati-area addressable cable system. Subscribers can buy the package of 25 home games for \$100, or view any one of those games for \$5.95.

Cleveland Indians

WUAB(TV) Cleveland has signed a new three-year rights contract under a renewal clause in its old one with the Indians, a team that is for sale. It will broadcast 60 regular-season games, 45 of them away from home.

WWWE(AM) Cleveland once again bought the radio rights and will be carrying 15 preseason and 162 regular-season games.

This year, the radio and television rights went for \$3 million. It was said that the radio rights were up "considerably." One station official said the rights had risen so much that the station wasn't planning to bid for them next year.

This year for the first time WUAB is putting together a television station network. Thus far it has two affiliates—WUPW(TV) Toledo and

WKBN-TV Youngstown. The announcers are Joe Tait and Jack Corrigan. Sponsors include Toyota and Burger King.

WWWE's radio network consists of 28 affiliates. Its announcers remain Herb Score and Steve LaMar. Major sponsors include Anheuser-Busch, Marathon Oil, Farmers Insurance and the Ohio Lottery.

Detroit Tigers

WDiv(TV) Detroit spokeswoman, Eileen Wunderlich, said that Tigers games had the highest ratings and share of any major league baseball franchise last year, averaging a 22/46 in Arbitron. The station will originate 45 regular-season and five exhibition games (with the possible addition of a few second games of doubleheaders). Major sponsors will include Miller, Chevrolet, McDonald's, J.C. Penney, Kroger, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Republic Airlines, Pepsi-Cola, Sunoco, Michigan Bell and Goodyear. Once again WDiv will feed a network of five stations for the Tigers games.

WJR(AM) Detroit has a new five-year contract under which it originates all Tigers regular-season games, plus a minimum of 12 exhibition games. Also carrying the games are about 37 stations. Advertisers include Anheuser-Busch, Marathon Oil, Chevrolet, Security Bancorp, Michigan Lottery and Independence Health (a health maintenance organization).

Pro Am Sports Systems (PASS), a cable program network owned by John E. Fetzer, former owner of the Tigers, will distribute four preseason and 81 regular season games to more than 100,000 cable subscribers this year. William J. Wischman, executive vice president and general manager, said the Tigers receive a certain price per subscriber, counted against a guaranteed minimum rights fee.

Houston Astros

All 162 regular and 25 exhibition games will be broadcast over KTRH(AM) and will be transmitted to a network of at least 11 stations, probably more by the time the season begins. The Astros also are negotiating for Spanish-language coverage over a radio station in the Houston area. The key sponsor on radio will be Budweiser but other clients are Ozark Airlines, Kay Jewelry, Eastern Airlines and General Telephone.

KTRH(TV) handles television coverage of the Astros schedule. A total of 81 games, 73 regular season, will be transmitted to 11

other TV stations. He said that six other clients are expected to sign over the next few weeks.

Kansas City Royals

WDAF-TV Kansas City, Mo., in the second year of its three-year contract, is the originating station for a network of 18 stations. Two pre-season games with the Cardinals will be broadcast in addition to 45 regular season games—five more than last year when the Royals won the 1985 World Series. "Our network will carry more games than ever before," said Earl Beall, WDAF-TV vice president and general manager. "There is a strong interest in the Royals because of their successful year" last season.

Miller Beer is the major sponsor; other advertisers include Toyota, Midas Mufflers, Long John Silver, Safeway, Snapper tools, Research Hospital and United Super (supermarket chain).

Among the new things WDAF-TV is doing this year is sending a satellite uplink truck to the Royals spring training camp in Fort Myers, Fla., to beam back live reports for its 5, 6 and 10 p.m. local news. In addition, WDAF-TV has planned two prime time specials on the Royals, Beall said.

On the radio side, WIBW(AM) Topeka, Kan., will lead a network of 117 stations in its first year of a three-year contract, according to Bob Fromme, general manager of the Royals Radio Network. In Kansas City, the games will return to KMBZ(AM) after a three-year association with KCMO(AM). Previously, the Royals had been heard on KMBZ for 15 consecutive years. Major sponsors for the radio network include Anheuser-Busch, Ford Automobiles, Farmer's Insurance, John Deere, and for the 18th consecutive year, Guy's potato chips. Last year, WIBW purchased its own satellite uplink facility and the network supplied downlink dishes to all but about a dozen stations which already owned them. That, said Fromme, "worked beautifully."

Los Angeles Dodgers

The Dodgers are entering the second year of three-year agreements with KTTV(TV) and KABC(AM), both Los Angeles, and Metromedia's Dodgervision cable service. Each of the agreements involves sharing sales of advertising time. Merritt Willey, vice president of marketing for the Dodgers, said



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that the team and the stations each sell time for pre- and post-game shows, while the club sells national sponsorships for the games themselves.

Now in its second year, Dodgervision, through the Dodgers and Metromedia Television, will offer 25 home games for \$79.95 (down from \$85 for 20 games last year), or \$5.95 per game on a pay-per-view basis. Dodgervision now has approximately 40 cable systems, accounting for some 500,000 addressable homes, signed up. Sales of time within the cable broadcasts are said to going "300% better" than last year. A variety of promotional giveaways have been offered as well to attract viewers.

Metromedia's KTTV will broadcast 50 games. Marty Bergman, general sales manager, said that sales were up 5%, and would probably be up 5%-10% on the year. KVVU-TV Las Vegas, will also broadcast 12-15 weekend games.

Along with broadcasting 182 games, KABC(AM) will also air a variety of specials beginning in March from spring training. George Green, vice president and general manager, said that the schedule "has been sold out for months," and major sponsors include Datsun and Miller Beer.

Spanish coverage will be heard on three stations—KTNQ(AM) Los Angeles, KNEZ(AM) Lompoc and KVIM(AM) Coachella, all California. Additionally two stations in Mexico will carry the full schedule, and a variety of Mexican stations will carry games on an occasional basis.

Milwaukee Brewers

WTVV(TV) Milwaukee will broadcast eight pre-season and 60 regular season games of the Brewers this year, an increase of 14 regular games over last year, said the station's general manager, Al Leitt. Two Wisconsin stations are new to the lineup, WLAX(TV) LaCrosse and WMSN-TV Madison, both start-up independents and both replacing affiliate stations that previously carried the games. "The independents have less trouble making room on their schedule for the games than do affiliates," said Leitt. Major advertisers for the games so far include Miller, True Value Hardware, Taco Bell, Sentry Food Stores and Blue Cross.

The Brewers retain rights to the radio broadcasts, which will be aired over originating station WTMJ(AM) Milwaukee and about 65 additional stations serving 49 markets, said Bill Haig, vice president broadcast operations for the Brewers. Major radio network advertisers will include Pabst, Pepsi and Chevrolet. Milwaukee advertisers will include Amoco and Ariens lawn and garden equipment. Haig said all regular-season games would be broadcast, along with 18 exhibition games.

Minnesota Twins

Broadcast television rights for the Minnesota Twins are held by United Television's KMSP-TV Minneapolis-St. Paul, which is in the second year of a four-year contract and this year will carry three preseason games starting March 9, followed by 68 regular-season games (64 on the road, four at home). Although KMSP-TV has been broadcasting the games since 1979, it only acquired the rights last year from Midwest Federal Savings & Loan. Now Midwest, along with Miller Beer, are major sponsors, according to Stuart Swartz, KMSP-TV vice president and general manager.

WCCO(AM) is in the second year of a three-year contract and so far has signed 50 stations in a regional network. Bob Houghton, general sales manager, says that's the same number the network had signed at this time last year and hopes to equal last year's total of 60 affiliates. WCCO will broadcast 12 preseason games and 162

regular-season contests plus an exhibition match against the University of Minnesota.

Major sponsors—"those with six figures"—include Anheuser-Busch, Farmer's Insurance, John Deere (lawn and garden equipment), Dodge, Midwest Federal Savings & Loan and Hardware Hank (regional hardware chain). Houghton said there is an increase in the number of smaller advertisers seeking shorter schedules this year because of higher rates broadcasters must charge to cover rights fees. Houghton said he has 14 advertisers that bought a minute or less per game: "The problem is a lot of the smaller advertisers want exclusivity and we can't offer that." As evidence that smaller advertisers are seeking the most economical schedules, all the spots in the pre- and post-game shows are sold out.

Baseball on the birds

Major League Baseball Productions is launching the Baseball Radio Newsatellite, a programming service for local stations that will include scores, player interviews and game actualities. It is being marketed exclusively by Public Interest Affiliates, a Chicago-based radio program supplier ("Riding Gain," Jan. 27).

The Baseball Radio Newsatellite is scheduled to begin April 7 (the 1986 season's opening day) and will offer two daily feeds. Monday through Friday: a 30-minute early morning feed designed as a news highlight service and a second 15-minute afternoon feed that can also run as a self-contained program called *Baseball Today*. There will also be a 45-minute feed at 12:15 p.m. NYT on Saturday and Sunday. All transmissions will be sent via Satcom I-R. Providing the satellite time for the collection and distribution of the new service's programming will be IDB Communications, Los Angeles.

As for IDB, that firm is once again offering its Sports Satellite Interconnect for delivering (backhauling) radio broadcasts of away games back to the home city. Peter Hartz, IDB's vice president of marketing, reports that 22 of the 26 Major League Baseball team rights holders have signed for the service. IDB has transmit/receive earth stations in all of the MLB cities. Cost for both National and American League rights holders is \$465 per game for all 81 away contests during the regular season.

Hartz also said that IDB will backhaul some 200 baseball games from 24 different locations in Arizona and Florida during spring training.

Montreal Expos

Canadian brewer Labatts has replaced competitor Carling O'Keefe as the broadcast television rights holder for the Montreal Expos, signing a five-year deal. (O'Keefe's contract was to terminate with the 1986 season, but the company relinquished its rights as it "re-focuses its promotional and marketing efforts.")

As with O'Keefe in previous years, Labatts will sell back the TV rights for a certain number of games to the Canadian Broadcasting Corp., which will carry the contests over both an English and French network. The CBC is expected to carry 28 games in English and 42 contests in French, said Pierre Gauvreau, group vice president for the Montreal Expos.

For radio, CFCF(AM) Montreal renewed its contract for another five years as the English rights holder. The station plans to transmit eight preseason games and the entire regular-season schedule to a 20-station network, all outside Quebec province. Major sponsors include General Motors.

Entering a new four-year pact for French radio rights is Telemedia Communications, which will transmit this season's games to a regional network of about 40 stations through its CKAC(AM) Montreal. Some of the advertisers for the French broadcasts are General Motors, Goodyear and Coca-Cola.

Looking at cable, The Sports Network, Toronto, will be starting its second season of baseball coverage for the Montreal Expos as it enters the first year of a new two-year arrangement. TSN, which is owned by Labatts, will air five pre-season and 40 regular-season games. It has a subscriber universe of 785,000.

New York Mets

Superstation WOR-TV New York, which has just been sold by RKO to MCA, will start its 24th consecutive year as the originator of New York Mets television broadcasts, a rights partnership arrangement it has had with the team since its inception in 1962.

The station, which sells the air time, is entering the last year of a five-year deal. Planned for 1986 are six preseason games and 87 regular-season contests (45 home and 42 away).

"Sales are very strong," said Peter Leon, WOR-TV vice president and general manager. All of last year's major advertisers are returning this year, Leon said. The list includes: Budweiser, Nissan, Manufacturers Hanover, Burger King, Oldsmobile dealers, Ivory Soap, Lincoln-Mercury dealers, Bell Atlantic, General Cigar and Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.

WHN(AM) New York, which has just been sold by Doubleday Broadcasting to Emmis Broadcasting, will be entering the first year of a new five-year pact. The station will feed a regional network, which is being set up by Rockville, Md.-based Independent Network Consultants, of some 22 stations. "That includes KDOQ(AM) Honolulu each time Sid Fernandez pitches," said station vice president and general manager, Pat McNally, in reference to one of the Mets' potential starting pitchers for the 1986 season who is of Hawaiian descent. WHN will air 14 pre-season games in addition to all regular season contests.

Major sponsors on the radio side include: Budweiser, Amoco, Polaroid, Chrysler-Plymouth dealers, the New York State Lottery, Members Only, Kahn Meats and A.C. Delco.

SportsChannel is entering the fifth year of a 30-year deal for the team's pay-cable rights and will carry 60 games, both home and away. Advertiser participation includes: Anheuser-Busch, Manufacturers Hanover, Hertz, Toyota, Buick and TWA. The number of systems and fees are the same as those for the New York Yankees (see below).

Independent News broadcast from 7:30 p.m. to 7, where it would compete head-on with the network newscasts in New York (BROADCASTING, Feb. 17). A WPXI spokesman said the station is still considering several options including showing the games on a "tape delay basis" and, possibly joining the contests "in progress" at 8 p.m.

There will be two new additions to WPXI's announcing team this season. Joining long-time veteran announcers Phil Rizzuto and Bill White will be former major league pitcher Jim Kaat and former Yankees manager Billy Martin. Moving over to radio will be Spencer Ross, who will join Bobby Mercer and John Gordon.

For radio, talk-formatted WABC(AM) is in its last year of a six-year agreement as the Yankees' originating station. The club retains the broadcast rights with Hackensack, N.J.-based Adler Communications handling game sales. WABC sells only pre- and post-game sales packages. Among the major sponsors in this category are Channel Home Centers, ADT (alarm systems), Nynex, Schaeffer beer, Long Island Savings, Ozark Airlines, Century Hardware, Krauszer's (a New Jersey convenience store chain) and the New York State Lottery. Some of the pre-game inventory, according to Jim Haviland, station vice president and general manager, includes spots for "Yankee related features" in the Art Russ Jr. sports talk show which begins at 6 p.m. The station will air 19 pre-season games in addition to all regular

season contests.

On the cable side, SportsChannel is entering the fifth year of a 15-year agreement. Like last year, the cable channel will air 40 games, both home and away. SportsChannel is carried on 57 systems in the New York metropolitan area as well as the upstate New York region. SportsChannel is also viewed in parts of Connecticut through SportsChannel of New England.

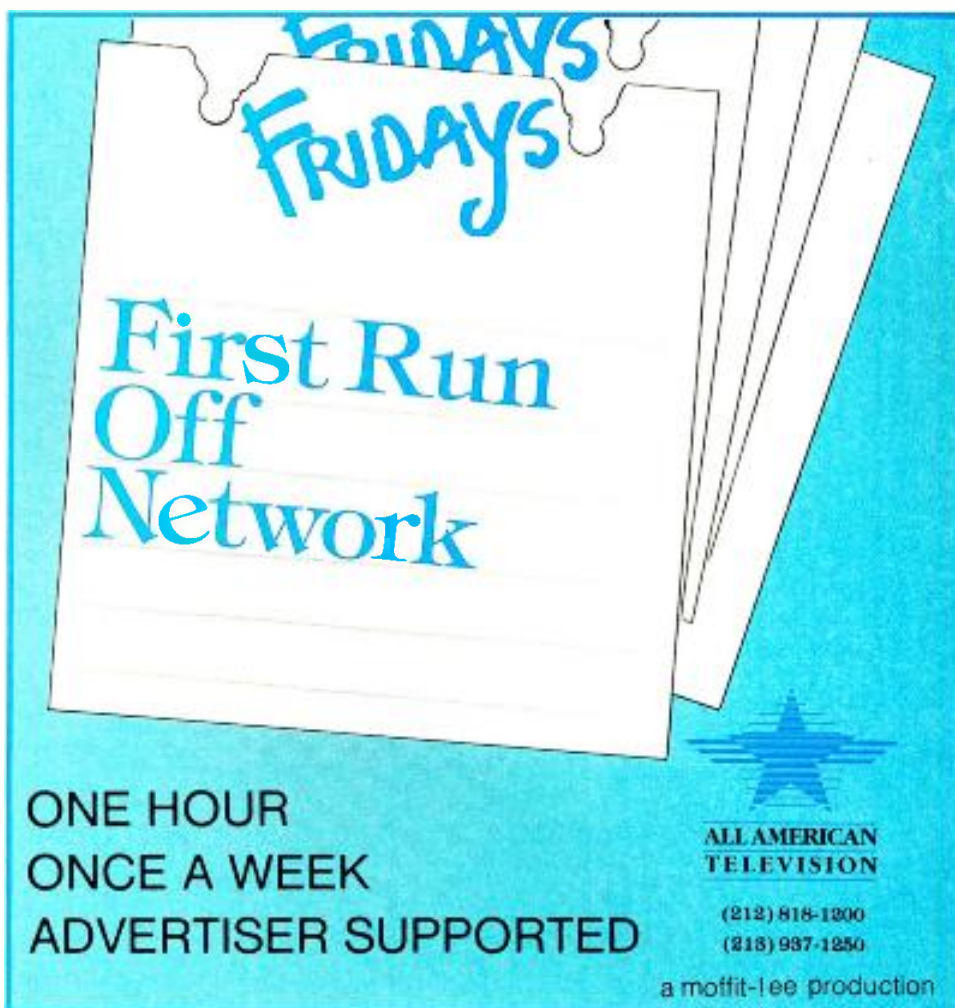
Major SportsChannel advertisers include Anheuser-Busch, Toyota, Hertz, Manufacturers Hanover, TWA, Goodyear and Dodge. Phil Rizzuto and Bill White will work the cablecasts along with sportscaster Mel Allen and former Yankee star Mickey Mantle. According to a company spokesman, system operators pay SportsChannel \$4.50 per subscriber, per month. Subscribers pay an average of \$8.50 per month for the cable service.

Oakland A's

The A's enter the second year of a three-year pact with CBS-affiliate KPIX(TV) San Francisco this year. For every 25 minutes that KPIX sells, the A's get to sell five. The 33 games that will be broadcast will be carried on both weekends and in prime time. There is no

New York Yankees

WPXI(TV) New York is entering its 36th consecutive year of New York Yankees baseball telecasts with plans to air four pre-season and 96 regular season games, the same as in 1985. Major sponsors in 1986 include Anheuser-Busch, Toyota and Dodge. The station holds the broadcast television rights and is in the second year of a three-year deal. However, it finds itself faced with a broadcast dilemma in the coming season due to the Yankees' decision to move the starting time of their night home games from 8 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The station does not want to move its local weeknight



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cable coverage of the team in the San Francisco market.

Although Ann Miller, program director of the station said that the ratings for A's games were "not spectacular" last year, this year's team is young and has a number of players the team feels could be stars. Promotion for the games will attempt to develop name recognition and "star quality" for the players. The TV station currently has two sponsors—Toyota and the Northern California Toyota dealers. A third is said to be close at hand.

KSFO(AM) San Francisco is entering the second year of a three-year agreement that calls for sharing of promotion, marketing, merchandising and revenue. Jim Kline, vice president and general manager, said that the station's sales pace was "on schedule" with last year, perhaps a little ahead. In a market that is 16% hispanic, Spanish radio coverage will originate from KBRG(FM) Freemont.



Philadelphia Phillies

WTAF-TV Philadelphia is entering the third year of a contract that runs through 1992. Taft Broadcasting, which owns the station, also owns between 40% and 50% of the Phillies. The station will carry 90 games (68 road, 17 home and five exhibition), more than it has ever aired. Almost 40 of the games will feature a 30-minute pre-game show. WCAU(AM) there will again carry the team's full slate of games on radio.

Prism, one of the few remaining pure pay regional sports cable networks, will carry 26 home games and nine away games. Prism now has 364,000 subscribers and has carried Phillies games since its inception in 1976.



Pittsburgh Pirates

KDKA-AM-TV, which have been carrying Pirates games since 1955, are both entering the final year of two-year pacts. But both have an optional third year. The radio station will carry the team's full schedule, while the television station, a CBS affiliate, will carry 40 games this year (including three home games), 34 of which will be aired in prime time.

With the demise of Home Sports Entertainment in Pittsburgh before the start of last season, the Pirates have been without a cable deal. TCI, however, which owns the Pittsburgh cable system, confirmed last week that it is negotiating with the team for

the cable rights. TCI's John Sie said if the company secures the rights to some Pirate games, it intends to carry them on a "locally originated" channel with other forms of entertainment programming. Sie said that TCI was considering a sort of "hybrid" plan where the system would sell advertising on the channel and perhaps impose a subscriber fee as well.



San Diego Padres

"We are broadcasting four games this season in stereo," reports Steve Silverman, baseball producer for KCST(TV) San Diego, which will originate coverage of 51 Padres road games (including two preseason matches from Yuma). "That's a first for us." The NBC affiliate has been set up for stereo broadcasting since early last year. Silverman says the station will have five cameras and three tape replay units at each contest.

Play-by-play will be handled again this year by Jerry Coleman and Dave Campbell. Major sponsors signed by the station include Anheuser-Busch.

KCST will be operating on a one-year extension of a three-year contract, with negotiations under way for a new long-term deal.

In an unusual arrangement, the Padres pick up KCST's origination of its games for distribution to seven other broadcasters via its own television network. The stations are free to sell their own advertising within the games.

The Padres have also bought back distribution rights to their English-language radio coverage, although KFMB(AM) San Diego continues to originate the programming.

"We're taking the radio in-house," said the team's newly named director of broadcasting, Jim Winters (previously with the Cincinnati Reds). "We're buying the rights to our games from KFMB and selling the time ourselves. This is a first in the team's history." The Padres are selling all advertising within the games themselves, plus the pre-and post-game shows.

Anheuser-Busch is the prime in-game sponsor, to be joined by Chevrolet and Home Federal Savings & Loan. Coleman and Campbell will provide play-by-play, with Bob Chandler and Ted Lightner providing commentary when the former are on television.

According to KFMB vice president and general manager, Paul Palmer, sale of spots in Padres-related programming, such as sports talk shows, "is going very well." He said promotion within talk programming began "right after the Super Bowl" and includes listener involvement tie-ins. "We are also doing concert promotions with the team," he said, "including the traditional main event with the Beach Boys, this year on May 18 after the Montreal game."

Cox Cable will jointly produce pay-per-

view coverage with the Padres for distribution on its San Diego system and nearby franchises operated by Southwestern Cable and American Television & Communications. A total of 41 home games will be shown in the arrangement in 1986, its third successive year. "It's been tremendously successful," reported Kathleen Tyner, an assistant to the Padres' Winters. Chandler and Lightner provide play-by-play commentary.

XEXX(AM) Tijuana, Mexico, has signed a new three-year contract for continuation of its Spanish-language coverage, primarily feeding other stations in Mexico.



San Francisco Giants

Oakland's KTVU(TV) is in the third year of a five-year contract with the Giants for local coverage of the San Francisco team. Program manager Caroline Class expects to originate 31 games this year, give or take one. No exhibition games are slated and the first broadcast is set for April 8.

Miller Beer and the Northern California Toyota dealers are among the returning sponsors.

Miller Beer and the Northern California Toyota dealers are among the returning sponsors.

According to Class, coverage will be "pretty much the same thing as we've done for a long time; the same number of games, the same breakdown of teams and the same format." Gary Park is expected to continue as play-by-play announcer.

According to San Francisco Giants spokesman Mike Shapiro, the team will offer pay cable coverage this season for the first time under a recently-signed agreement with San Jose-based Gill Cable. The Giants will co-produce a 45-game package with Gill for distribution on the Gill-operated Bay Area Interconnect, which distributes regional programming to systems owned by Western, Viacom and Gill Cable throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. Subscribers may view the games in any of four configurations: a "full season" ticket of 45 games (\$154), a 22 "night game only" package (\$99), a mix of 22 night and day games (\$99) and on a pay-per-view basis (\$5.95 each). All fees are suggested retail prices. One pre-season game will kick off the partnership on April 6.

Jay Barrington, KNBR(AM) San Francisco sports director, is coordinating radio origination this year of the team's 152 home and 13 pre-season games. A major outdoor billboard campaign is among a number of client and listener promotions being planned.

Hank Greenwald has provided radio play-by-play in the past but it was not known last week whether he would continue this year.

Broadcast origination of the Giants was

somewhat unresolved until recently in the wake of aggressive (but thus far unsuccessful) attempt by owner Bob Lurie to get his team out of the windswept Candlestick Park. The Giants will stay put for at least the coming season.

advertisers signed for KIRO-TV's coverage are Budweiser, Toyota, Midas Mufflers and Snapper mowers.

There will be pay television coverage of about 50 Cards home games by Cencom Cable Associates. Scott Widham, general manager of Cencom, said systems with almost 200,000 subscribers have signed for the coverage.

Seattle Mariners

KIRO(AM) Seattle will have a package of 162 regular-season and 20 exhibition games this year. The station has put together a regional network of about 20 stations in Oregon, Montana, Idaho and Alaska. Bill Aanenson, local sales manager, is pleased with the progress of sales, pointing out that Seattle, for its size, has a large assortment of professional sports competing with baseball for advertising dollars. On the client roster for 1986 are Chevron, Farmer's Insurance, Pepsi-Cola, Puget Power, GTE and Mazda.

Mariners baseball has a new originating TV station this year—KIRO-TV. It will telecast 37 regular-season games and some exhibition contests. Glen Wright, vice president and general manager, said a regional network has lined up stations in Portland, Ore.; Anchorage; Spokane, Wash.; Boise, Idaho, and Yakima, Wash. Among the

St. Louis Cardinals

The Cards games will be broadcast over KMOX(AM) St. Louis in a package of 162 regular-season contests and a number of exhibition games. A regional network of about 115 stations will carry the Cards schedule.

Bob Hyland, regional vice president, CBS Radio, said sales are progressing well and listed these major advertisers: Chevrolet, Anheuser-Busch, Amoco, Ozark Airlines, True Value, McDonald's, TWA and the Carrier Corp.

Television coverage of the redbirds will be by KSDK(TV), which will celebrate its 24th year telecasting the games. William Bolster, vice president and general manager, reports that sales are "moderate" because of the multiplicity of sports programming in the market. Principal advertisers are Kroger's, Toyota, McDonald's, TWA and Midas. KSDK will be telecasting between 44 and 50 games and will feed them to a network of about 15 stations.

Texas Rangers

Gaylord Broadcasting's KTVT(TV) Fort Worth is entering the second year of a five-year deal as broadcast rights holder for the Rangers. The rights pact is part of an overall agreement whereby Gaylord purchased 35% of the club. (Eddie Chiles still owns the remaining shares).

KTVT will air 50 away games during the regular season, a portion of which will be picked up by a five-state regional network of 15 stations. KTVT plans no preseason games.

Major TV advertisers for the 1986 season include: Budweiser, the principal beer sponsor; Delta, Toyota, True Value Hardware, Dr Pepper, Absorbine Jr. and Canon cameras.

On the radio side, WBAP(AM) Fort Worth will begin its 13th consecutive year of Rangers broadcasts as it enters the second year of a

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four-year rights deal. WBAP will also serve as the originating station for a regional network of 10-12 stations that will include WCCF(AM) Punta Gorda, Fla., site of the Rangers spring training camp. Some of the station's radio sponsors are: Budweiser, True Value, Dr Pepper, Coca-Cola, GTE and Delta, all of which are returning advertisers. "There are also a number of new advertisers coming on board," said Mike O'Donnell, director of sports sales for WBAP.

Home Sports Entertainment, a division of the Houston Sports Association, holds the pay-cable rights. The cable network plans to air 60 home games. They will be carried on 85 systems in a five-state area—although the majority are in Texas—with a subscriber universe of about 170,000.

Toronto Blue Jays

Telemedia Broadcast Services is beginning the first year of a new four-year contract to broadcast the Blue Jays over a 52-station network from originating station CJCL(AM) Toronto. In the second year of coast-to-coast coverage (previously, broadcasts were confined to Ontario province), TBS will carry seven preseason games and 162 regular-

season games. Len Bramson, TBS president, said that major sponsors include McDonald's, Coca-Cola, Duracell batteries, Champion spark plugs, Labatts and the Canadian Imperial Bank. Bramson said that advertising on the radio network was up about \$800,000 over last year, in part because TBS increased its rates from \$40,000 a 30-second spot to \$60,000. "It's the biggest show in Canada."

Television broadcast rights for the Blue Jays are held by Labatts brewery, which also owns 45% of the team. The games will be broadcast over the CTV network. Cable rights are held by the The Sports Network, a Toronto-based pay sports network that will carry 40 regular-season games. TSN has just under 800,000 subscribers.

Technology

HDTV in sharp focus at Prague meeting

International broadcast unions develop mixed final document on HDTV, which cites wide support of production proposal but notes continued uncertainty of some key European nations and others

A world standard for high-definition television studio systems received a boost of sorts at a gathering of nine international broadcast unions in Prague Feb. 17-23.

The Interunion meeting, attended by 200, including representatives of U.S. TV networks, developed a mixed final document on HDTV, recognizing both the extensive support for a U.S.-backed HDTV proposal, and the continued uncertainty among some key broadcasters in Europe and elsewhere ("Closed Circuit," Feb. 24).

It was the first such conference of the organizations since a 1983 event in Algiers, and a total of 20 technical recommendations were developed in areas such as digital television tape recording, satellite broadcasting of HDTV and international auxiliary frequency standards. Television and radio programming and legal issues were also discussed.

The meeting was not the last or most important arena for HDTV considerations—conclusive discussion of the HDTV question is set for next May's plenary meeting of the CCIR (International Radio Consultative Committee) in Yugoslavia—but some viewed it as a possible indicator of sentiment on the issue prior to the final CCIR deliberations.

In the end, much of the tone of the groups' final HDTV resolution reflected that of the CCIR proposal, which cites parameters of a Japanese-originated HDTV production technology with 1,125 horizontal lines, a 16:9 aspect ratio and a 60 hertz field rate with interlace scanning. (The parameters themselves were not included as part of the Inter-

union recommendation as some parties had originally requested, but only within an annex to the document.)

The groups, eight of which approved the document, cited the "widespread support" received by the proposal, and noted the ad-

vantages of a single HDTV world standard and the "broad applications [and] urgent demand" for the technology. The groups also expressed concern that postponement of a decision on an HDTV studio standard would "most probably" lead to the establishment of

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